



Aruba's Cultural Celebration for Himno y Bandera was an entertainment extravaganza

Weeks of events that have commemorated thirty years of the Aruban National Anthem and Flag ended this past weekend with a barrage of events beginning on Friday night with the Himno y Bandera Cultural Event in the Plaza Betico Croes. Island dignitaries filled the front rows for an entertainment extravaganza featuring some of the island's top entertainers from the past and the present.

Thousands filled the square to purchase Aruba flag items and enjoy authentic Aruban treats while watching a terrific show. The voices of the island's most popular entertainers such as Edjean Semeleer and C-Zar Olarte filled the air, and a beautiful grand finale with the Popcorn Dancers was accompanied by flying confetti and a sky lit with a fabulous fireworks display.

One of the highlights of the show was when Padu Lampe, co-composer with Rufo Wever of our National Anthem "Aruba Dushi Terra" took the stage and sat at the piano once more to accompany one of the island's most beloved singers Sharon Rose. It was a nostalgic moment as they performed one of his many popular compositions.

In between acts, there was a presentation by Minister of Labor, Culture and Sport, Ramon Lee, to His Excellency, Prime Minister Nelson Oduber of a patriotic painting by Frank Croes, the director of the Instituto di Cultura. Minister Lee, in turn was also honored with a photo collage depicting many aspects of the island's legendary leader, Betico Croes.

It was a gloriously festive evening with an impressive attendance in honor of not only thirty years of the island's symbols of independence and identity, but also twenty years of "Status Aparte" and independence from the other islands of the Netherlands Antilles.